



Helping Kids Choose Clean Air



The Utah Department of Environmental Quality is encouraging people to be aware of how the choices they make impact air quality. Children may hear about the air in several ways – from media reports when pollution levels build and through the “Guidance for Schools: When to schedule indoor rather than outdoor activities based on the air quality in your communities.”

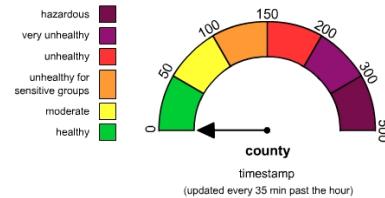
What are the major pollution issues in Utah?

 Ground-level ozone (sometimes called smog) is formed from automobile, industrial and other pollutions by chemical reactions when there is bright sunshine with high temperatures. The highest ozone concentrations usually occur between 2 and 8 p.m. from May through September. Prolonged exposure to low levels of ozone can reduce a healthy adult's lung function by 15 to 20 percent. Those with asthma, children and the elderly are even more sensitive to the effects of ozone.

 Particulate matter, called PM, is very small dust and soot particles. PM is generally created during a burning process and includes fly ash (from power plants), carbon black (from automobiles and diesel engines) and soot (from fireplaces and wood stoves). Along the Wasatch Front, the effects of PM can be seen as the thick brownish haze that gets trapped in the valleys during the summer and winter months when the air is very still.

How can I know when it's OK for children to spend time outside?

Utah's air monitoring system is updated every 35 minutes to bring you the latest information on the air quality for that hour. Check Utah's Air Quality Index (UAQI) at www.cleanair.utah.gov. Then use "Guidance for Schools" at health.utah.gov/asthma/schools.html to determine the appropriate level of outdoor activity for your children.



Are there resources available to teach children about Clean Air?

Our website, www.cleanair.utah.gov, has information on pollutants, the daily air quality report, air quality games, coloring pages and other resources. It also includes a PDF of "Kids Can Choose Clean Air" in printable format so that you can make additional bookmarks.

Who can I talk to if I have questions?

Call the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Planning and Public Affairs, at 536-4480 or e-mail us at deqinfo@utah.gov.